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BY
FRANK MILLER
AND DAVID
MAZZUCHELLI

YEAR ONE PART 1

BATMAN



**THE
HISTORY
OF THE
DC
UNIVERSE
is must
reading**

MAZZUCHELLI

He will become the
greatest crimefighter
the world has ever known...

It won't be easy.

BATMAN[®] YEAR ONE

BY
FRANK MILLER
AND
DAVID MAZZUCHELLI

Adapted from the works of
Bob Kane, Bill Finger
and Jerry Robinson

CHAPTER ONE: WHO I AM HOW I COME TO BE

Richmond Lewis: Colorist
Todd Klein: Letterer
Denny O'Neil: Editor
Batman created by Bob Kane

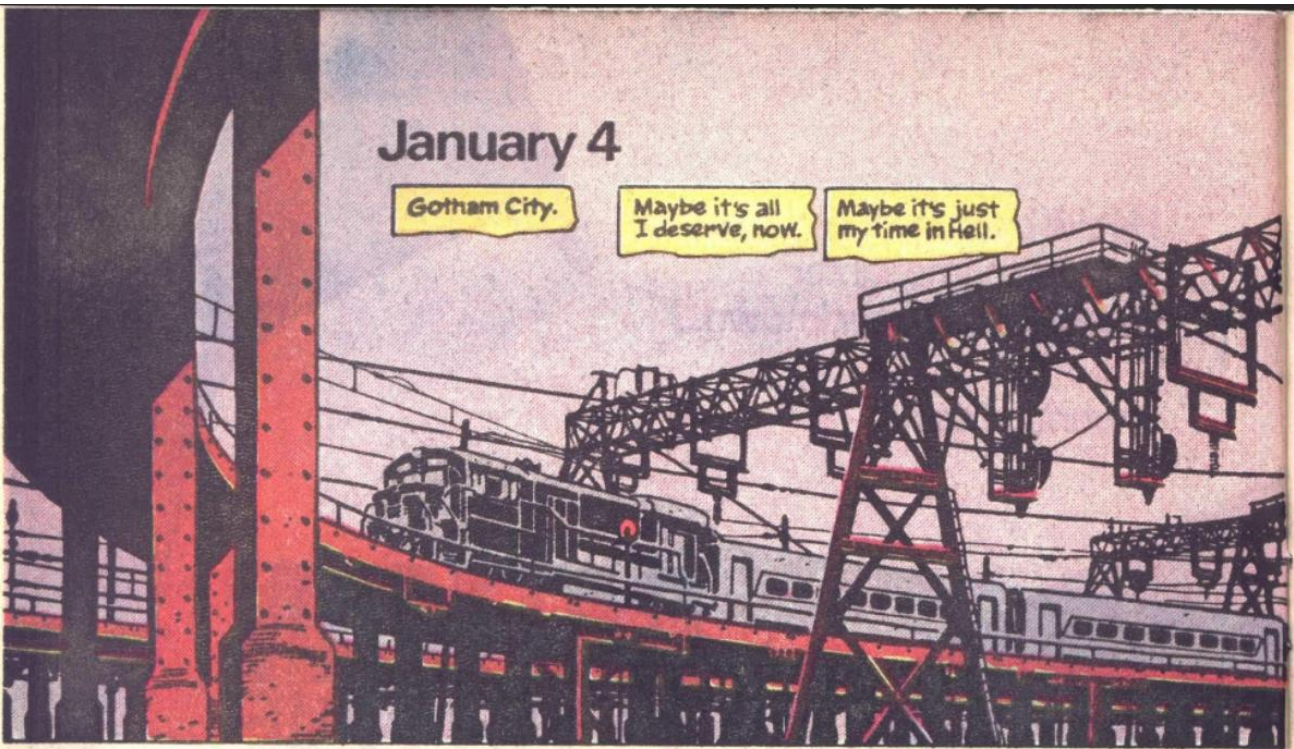


January 4

Gotham City.

Maybe it's all I deserve, now.

Maybe it's just my time in Hell.



Twelve hours. My stomach's been trying to eat itself for the last five.

Barbara's flying in. I don't care how much it costs.

Train's no way to come to Gotham...



...in an airplane, from above, all you'd see are the streets and buildings.

Fool you into thinking it's civilized.



...BEGINNING OUR FINAL DESCENT TO GOTHAM CITY. PLEASE RETURN SEATS AND TRAYS TO THEIR UPRIGHT POSITIONS...

From here, it's clean shafts of concrete and snowy rooftops. The work of men who died generations ago.



From here, it looks like an achievement.

I should have taken the train, I should be closer.

I should see the enemy.





THANK YOU, JACKIE. FOLLOWING THE **DISAPPEARANCE** OF A KEY WITNESS, ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY **HARVEY DENT** HAS WITHDRAWN CONSPIRACY CHARGES AGAINST POLICE COMMISSIONER **LOEB**...



YOU KNOW WE'RE ALL DELIGHTED TO HAVE YOU ON THE TEAM, LIEUTENANT.

GILLIAN B. LOEB
COMMISSIONER OF POLICE

YOU'LL GET MY BEST WORK, SIR. I PROMISE.

AND WE ARE A TEAM. A TEAM NEEDS TEAM SPIRIT, DON'T YOU THINK?

YES IT DOES. AND YOUR RECORD SHOWS YOU'VE GOT WHAT IT TAKES.

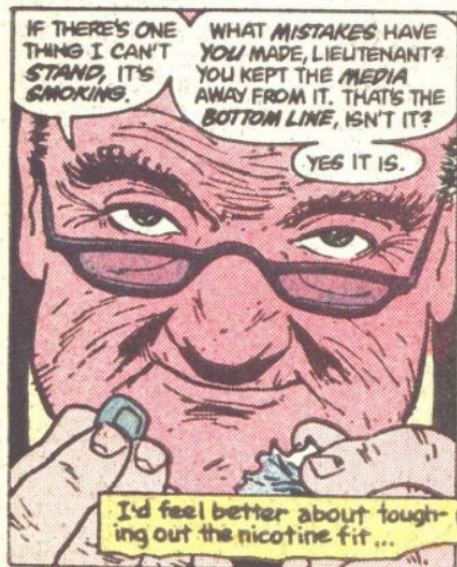
I KNOW I'VE MADE MY MISTAKES, SIR. I'M GRATEFUL FOR THIS CHANCE TO PROVE MYSELF...



IF THERE'S ONE THING I CAN'T STAND, IT'S SMOKING.

WHAT MISTAKES HAVE YOU MADE, LIEUTENANT? YOU KEPT THE MEDIA AWAY FROM IT. THAT'S THE BOTTOM LINE, ISN'T IT?

YES IT IS.



I'd feel better about toughing out the nicotine fit...

...if I didn't have to smell those Eucalyptus Cough Drops of his...

I SWEAR YOU WON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT MY HONESTY, COMMISSIONER.

LAST THING ON MY MIND. LAST THING.

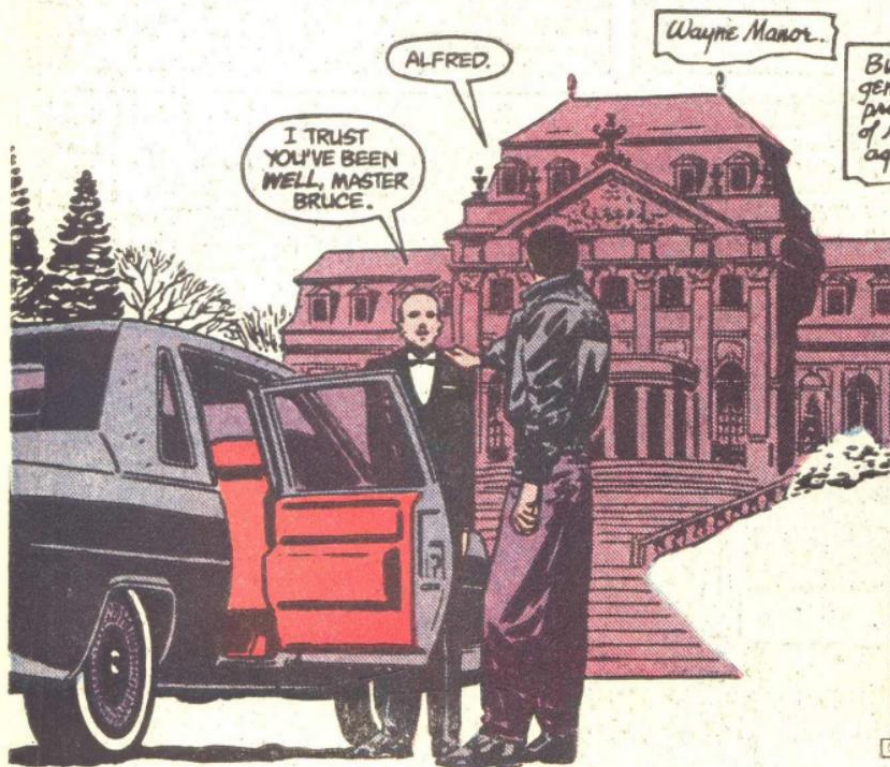


ALFRED.

I TRUST YOU'VE BEEN WELL, MASTER BRUCE.

Wayne Manor.

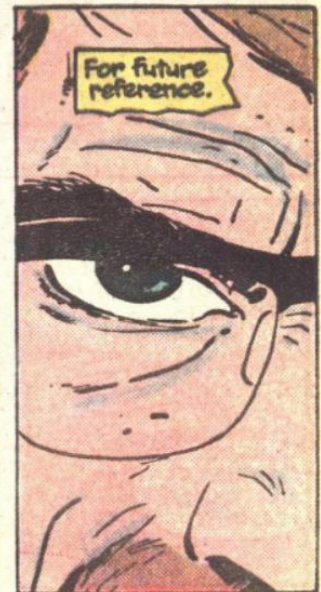
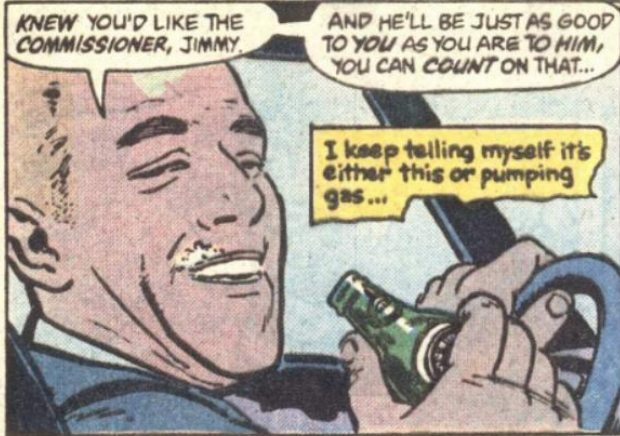
Built as a fortress, generations past, to protect a fading line of royalty from an age of Equals.

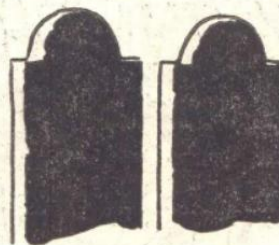
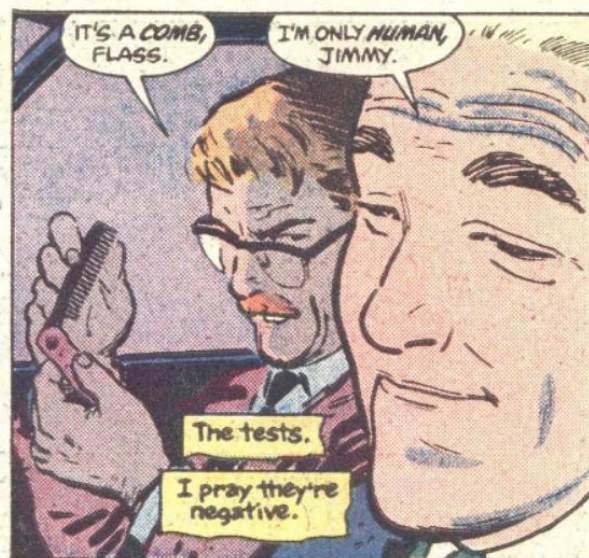


Mother. Father.
It's good to be back.



CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING





February 21

I'm not ready.



I have the means, the skill -- but not the method...



...no. That's not true. I have hundreds of methods.

But something's missing. Something isn't right.



I have to wait.

I have to wait.

February 26

...SO FATHER DONELLEY, HE SLIPS GORDON A FIFTY WITH THE HANDSHAKE...

GILLIAN B. L
COMMISSIONER
OF POLICE

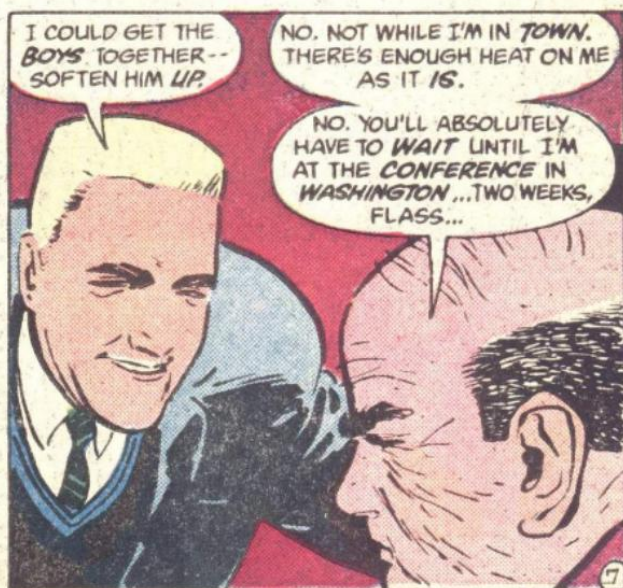


...AND GORDON, HE LOOKS AT IT LIKE HIS HAND'S GOT A DISEASE. THEN HE THROWS THE FIFTY IN THE PADRE'S FACE.

GIVES THE SQUAD A TWO-HOUR LECTURE. PUTS SCHELL ON PROBATION.

HE'S JUST NOT FITTING IN, GILL.

I HAD SUCH HOPES FOR THAT BOY...



I COULD GET THE BOYS TOGETHER -- SOFTEN HIM UP.

NO. NOT WHILE I'M IN TOWN. THERE'S ENOUGH HEAT ON ME AS IT IS.

NO. YOU'LL ABSOLUTELY HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL I'M AT THE CONFERENCE IN WASHINGTON... TWO WEEKS, FLASS...

The engine hums, gently,
not quite convinced it
should stop.

March 11

Everything is in place.
The attendant was even
obliging enough to ask me
for my autograph. My
alibi is set.

Bruce Wayne has been
sighted at the same hotel
as a visiting Hollywood
sex queen. That should
generate sufficient rumors--

--to account for my
whereabouts for the
next few hours.



This is a reconnaissance mission. Until I
know more, I must avoid combat. Until
I'm ready...

...my anonymity is an
obvious priority. The
murder of my parents
is a matter of public
record.

All it requires
is a change in
clothing and
complexion--

--and a single, memorable,
distracting detail.

Requested off this
night shift four times
now-- damn it, Barbara
needs me at night
these days, Barbara,
and little James...

...so I hope it's
a boy. So what.

Four times and no
reply. I'm not making
friends in the department--

GOING TO WORK,
LIEUTENANT?

GOING TO
BE LATE.

MAY
HAVE TO SKIP
THE WHOLE
NIGHT.



Valueimpression
Placeholder



Old trick--talking
to distract me--

--guarantees
an attack from
behind--



--should've checked my
military record--

--I was taught to handle
worse than this--



--but
then--

--it's been
a while--



Somewhere in the middle
of it they tell me it's
just a warning.

They remind me
that I've got a
pregnant wife.



Toward the end
I hear a
familiar chuckle.



Flass.





YOU STILL HERE?
TOLD YOU TO
GO, HOLLY.

HE HADN'T
SAID.



WE TALK THIS
OVER LATER,
SWEET CHUNKS.

NO...



...I THINK YOU'RE
FINISHED WITH
HER.

*I'm provoking
him.*

I really shouldn't.



MAN, YOU PUSHIN.
YOU ON THE EDGE.

YOU LOOKIN' FOR
A NEW SCAR. THAS
RIGHT. JUS TELL ME
WHERE, MAN...



OH. GEEZ...CAN'T BE
VICE. WE'RE PAID UP
JUST SOME IDIOT OUT
TO GET HIMSELF
KILLED.

SELINA...
DON'T STOP
NOW...



SHUT UP,
SKUNK.

YOU KNOW WHAT
I HATE MOST ABOUT
MEN, SKUNK?

PLEASE,
SELINA... TELL
ME... WHY YOU
HATE US SO...
ON, PLEASE...



NEVER MET ONE.

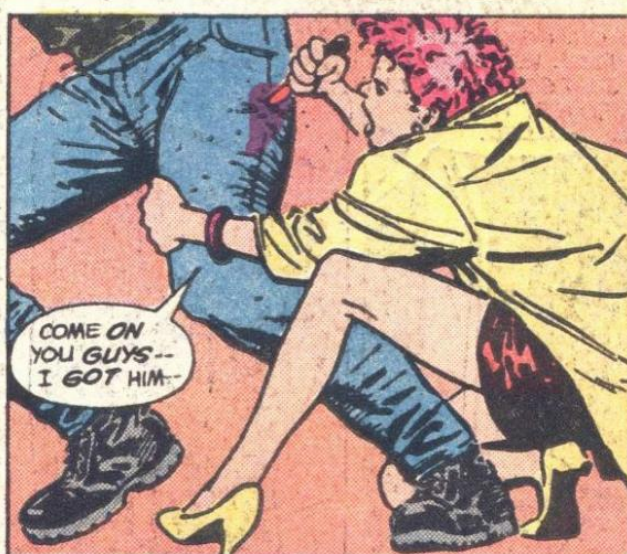
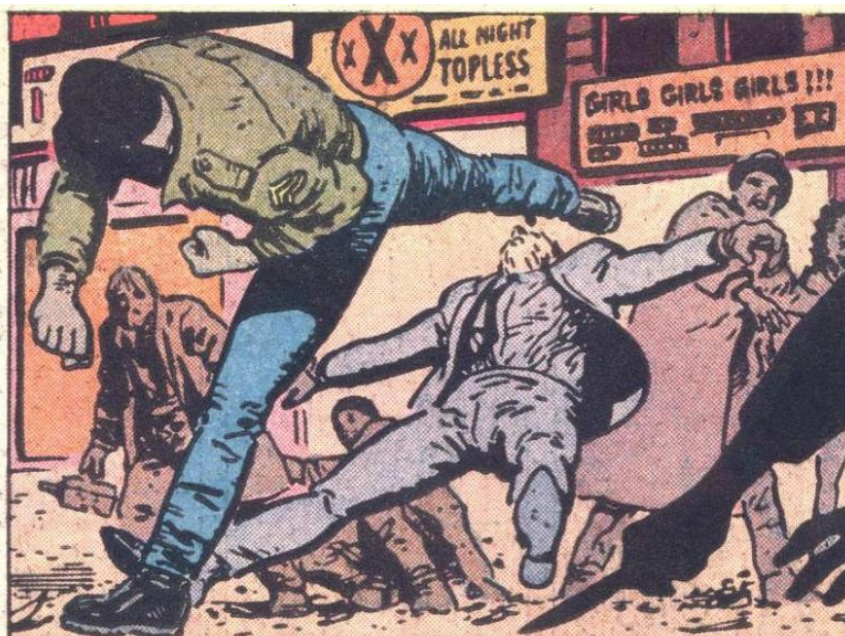
SAY IT
AGAIN...

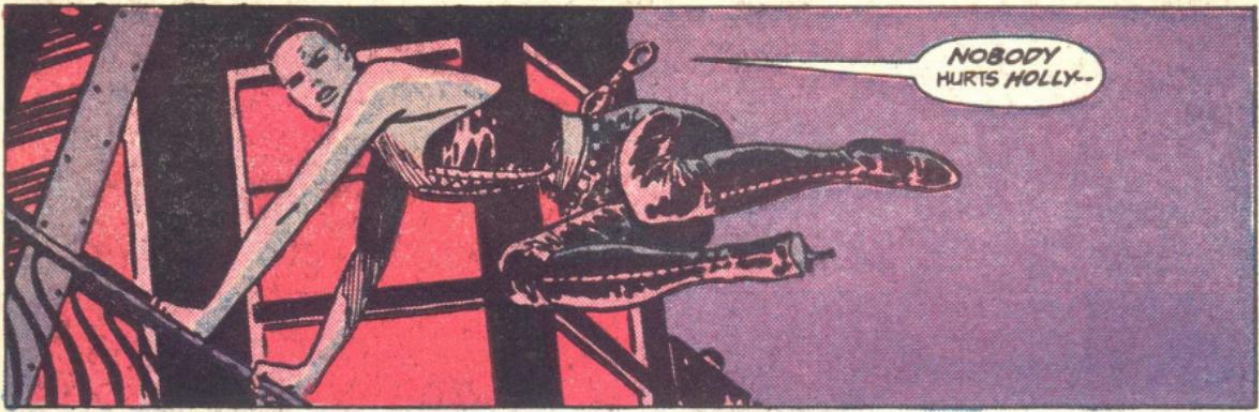


His eyes keep flicking away
from the girls to me. He
turns away for a second--

--a dead giveaway--

--he's pretty fast--







HEY--HE DIDN'T
MOVE, MAN.

HE WAS
GOING TO.

--hit an
artery--
losing
blood!--

--get up--
before they--



NEEDS A
DOCTOR.

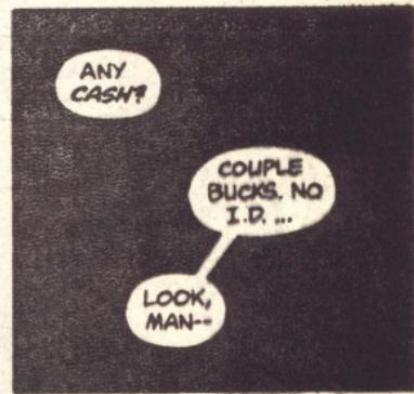
MAYBE
AFTER HE'S
BOOKED.

NNGG

--no-- can't
let them--



can't



ANY
CASH?

COUPLE
BUCKS. NO
I.D. ...

LOOK,
MAN--



--HE'S BLEEDING
ALL OVER THE SEAT.
WE GOT TO TAKE HIM
TO THE HOSPITAL.

YOU LOOK, BOY.
I'VE RUN IN A THOUSAND
LIKE HIM. DRIFTERS.
WHO NEEDS THEM.



IF HE
DIES,
HE--

YOU TWO.

STOP THE
CAR. GET
OUT.



WHAT THE
HELL ...

DON'T MIND HIM,
BOY. PROBABLY HOPPED
UP ON SOMETHING
FAST, Y'KNOW?

I
WARNED
YOU.

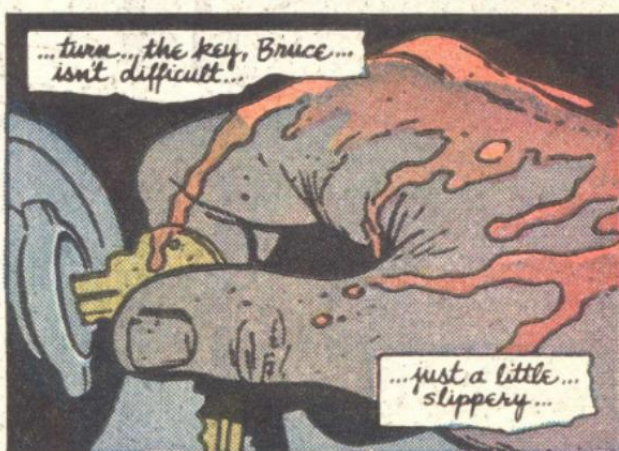


OH
MY GOD--
HE--

CHINKK



SMOKE FROM THE
BLAZING POLICE CRUISER
CAN BE SEEN FOR BLOCKS--
THE TWO OFFICERS WERE
FOUND UNCONSCIOUS,
THIRTY FEET AWAY...



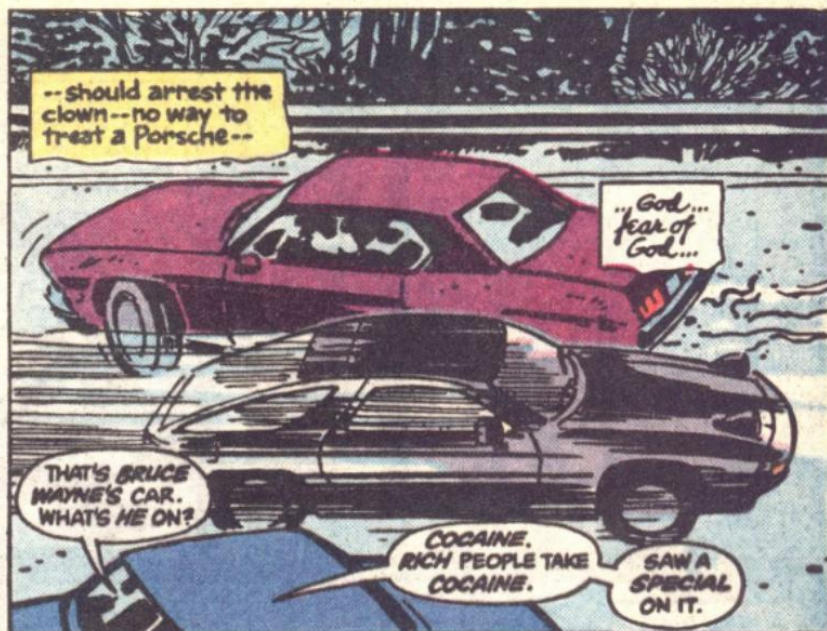
[CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING]

Valueimpression
Placeholder



Maniac--
almost hit
me--

SKREEE!



--should arrest the
clown--no way to
treat a Porsche--

God...
fear of
God...

THAT'S BRUCE
WAYNE'S CAR.
WHAT'S HE ON?

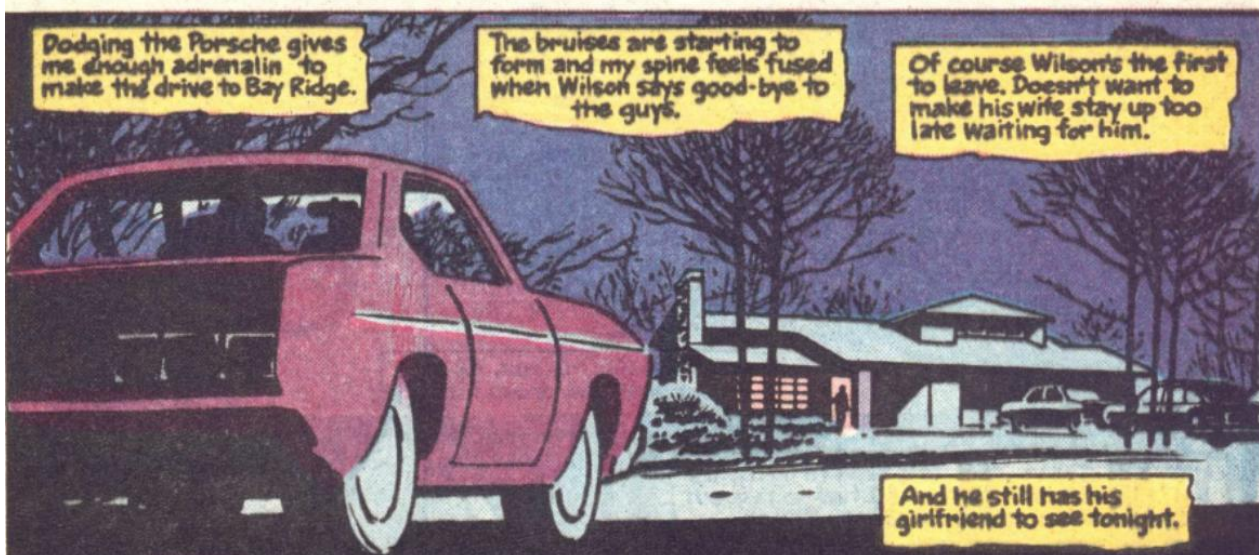
COCAINE.
RICH PEOPLE TAKE
COCAINE.

SAW A
SPECIAL
ON IT.



...fear...

...I have to make
them afraid...



Dodging the Porsche gives
me enough adrenalin to
make the drive to Bay Ridge.

The bruises are starting to
form and my spine feels fused
when Wilson says good-bye to
the guys.

Of course Wilson's the first
to leave. Doesn't want to
make his wife stay up too
late waiting for him.

And he still has his
girlfriend to see tonight.



Twenty minutes later
Stanssen stumbles out,
hunched over like he's
lost his life savings.

Then Renny.

I let them
both go home.

Finally.

Flass.

He staggers to his station wagon and gets in. It only takes him two tries.

I hear his engine start and watch him pull out. He almost flattens the mailbox before he remembers to turn his lights on.

I keep mine off and follow.

I haven't seen a house in three minutes when I pull up beside him and jerk the wheel.

He's ten miles over the speed limit.

Not fast enough to kill him when he hits the tree.

I show him my gun. He says my name and drops his.


He's big.

Green Beret training.


It's been fifteen years since I had to take out a Green Beret.

Even so--


--he deserves a handicap.



I don't crack his skull.




I don't crush his larynx.




I don't break his ribs or punch my hand through his chest.



I do just enough--



--to keep him out of the hospital.



I toss his gun into the woods. It should be rusty by morning.

I take his clothes off and leave him in his own cuffs by the side of the road.

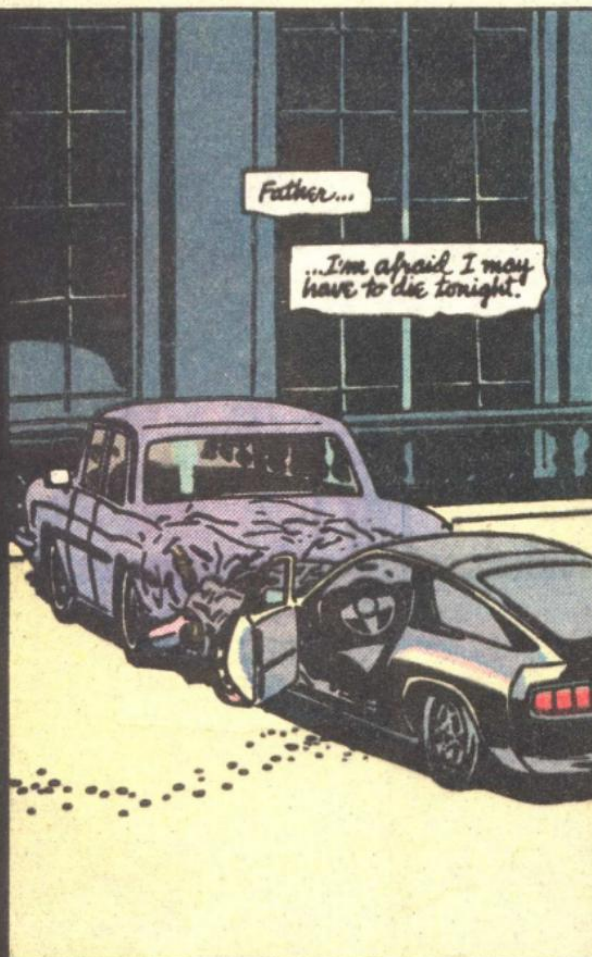
He'll never report it. Not Flass. He'll make up some story that involves at least ten attackers and never admit I did it.



But he'll know. And he'll stay away from Barbara.

Thanks, Flass.

You've shown me what it takes to be a cop in Gotham City.



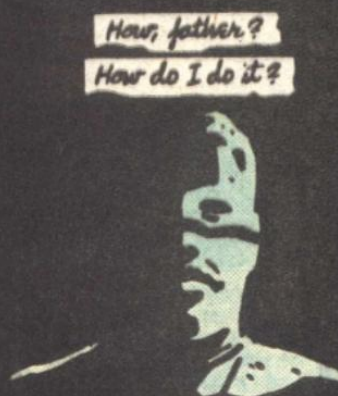
Father...

...I'm afraid I may
have to die tonight.



I've tried to be
patient. I've tried
to wait.

But I have
to know.



How, father?
How do I do it?

What do I use... to
make them afraid?



If I ring this bell,
Alfred will come.

He can stop the
bleeding, in time.

Another of
your gifts to
me, father.



I have wealth. The family
manor rests above a huge
cave that will be the
perfect headquarters...

...even a butler with
training in combat medicine...



...yes, father. I
have everything
but patience.

I'd rather die...
than wait...
another hour.



I have waited...
eighteen years...

... eighteen years
... since...

... since Zorro.

The Mark
of Zorro.

Since the walk.
That night.

And the man with
frightened, hollow
eyes and a voice
like glass being
crushed...



... since
all sense
left my
life.



Without warning,
it comes...



...crashing through the
window of your study
...and mine...



...I have seen it
before... somewhere...

...it frightened me...
as a boy...

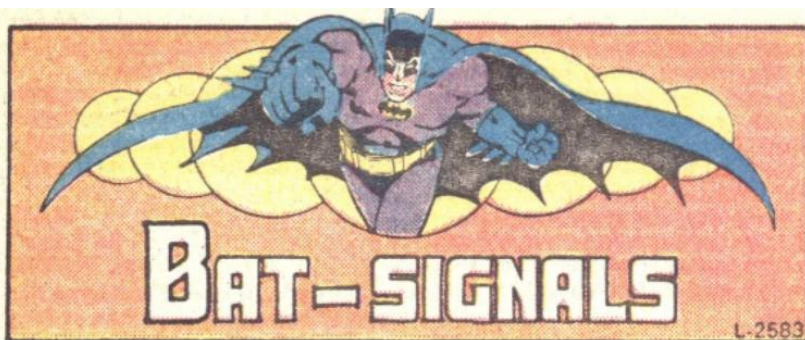


...frightened me...

...yes.
Father.

I shall become
a bat.





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Dear Dennis,

Since BATMAN #401 is a LEGENDS cross-over and has the charismatic Glorious Godfrey as a guest-star, I think I know what LEGENDS is going to be about, so here it goes:

Darkseid has sent Godfrey to Earth in order to make people turn against their heroes. Godfrey, being the charismatic person that he is, has no problem with this (as seen on page 11, panel 2). Earth's peoples will begin to distrust their heroes and I believe the heroes will begin to mistrust each other, and even themselves. During this turmoil, Darkseid will strike.

I believe this series will bring out the true meaning of what a hero is, and what makes up a hero. Unfortunately, I expect some heroes won't take the strain and will switch sides of the law. Thank you for your time.

Bob Davidson
172 Talmadge Dr.
Springfield, MA 01118

P.S. In MAN OF STEEL #3, Batman had the golden age insignia on his chest, and in 401 he had the modern-day one. Which one survived the CRISIS?

Many (that's the understatement of the year, Randall!) astute (Hah! Trying to butter them up so they won't think it was a goof, eh?) readers have pointed out the disparity between the two Batmans (She's stalling—she hasn't got a good answer, just watch!) who met Maggie.

Evil tight-shoe-making Brownies crept into Production one night just before we sent the book to the printer, and look what they did! Yellow circles, everywhere! (Lame, girl, lame...) Actually, the circle makes its exit this issue, so the change really starts here, sort of. Trust me. Just don't think about it. O.K.? Just enjoy this wonderful series—aren't those Miller and Mazzucchelli guys doing great?

Dear Denny, etc.,

I guess, Denny, it's all your fault. You're just too d*** good. I got BATMAN #400 simply because of all the collaborations. Then I read Dick's *Meanwhile* column and decided to get #401. Well, #402 has Max Collins, acclaimed mystery writer (and "Jim" Starlin*), so I guess I'll have to buy that ... #403 has Collins again ... uh ... #404-407 has Miller ... uh...

Listen, Den, if you keep getting all these great people, I may be forced to

become a regular buyer of BATMAN, and it's all your fault.

Ethan Kalett
Brooklyn, NY

I think Denny should have lots more faults like you, Ethan, and they should all write letters.

Bat-Friends:

BATMAN #401 put chills down my spine and made me break out into a cold sweat.

What was it that caused me to do this, you may ask. Was it the cover by John Byrne or the story written by Barbara Randall and illustrated by Trevor Von Eeden?

No, it was neither of these.

I had just glanced at the cover briefly, and hadn't even looked at the story yet. What was it, then, that caused this unusual reaction?

Well, instinctively, for the past several weeks, my first order of business in reading BATMAN has been to turn directly to the letters page, wherein I would scan for news of upcoming Bat-events. It was here that I had first learned of the Dark Knight's mini-series, details of the blockbuster Batman anniversary issue, the upcoming Batman's First Year and Brian Bolland's graphic novel. In this month's letters page I was pleased to find an introduction by new Batman editor Denny O'Neil.

It was this that caused me to quiver in excitement and anticipation, as well as the previously described reaction.

It is apparent that Denny intends to return Batman's characterization to that of the avenger and protector of the rain-slick city streets of the asphalt jungle which bore him. Now, imagine my elation when I turned the page to find a pin-up by Brian Bolland (who, in his chapter in BATMAN #400 has replaced Neal Adams as my favorite Bat-artist) and my favorite quote of Raymond Chandler's (who has written a few hard-boiled tales of his own). I assume it was Editor O'Neil's selection to supplement Brian's beautiful artwork with this quote. (Yes.—BJR) It wouldn't surprise me that that good judgment came from Denny; of all the writers who have tackled the Batman over the years since the original Kane/Finger collaborations, it is only Denny who has captured the true essence of the character. His classic tales beautifully embellished by

Neal Adams will forever stand in my mind as the definitive Batman.

I guess what I am trying to say here is that I'm a little bit excited about where Batman is headed.

In parting I would like to make just a little suggestion (as if Denny needs any advice on how to do Batman) that you continue to let different writers and artists take a crack at Batman. Batman is a character who just seems to bring out the best in everybody. In the past I have particularly enjoyed stories written by Steve Englehart, David V. Reed, Mike Barr, Denny (of course), and currently Frank Miller. On the artistic side, I've really enjoyed Neal Adams, Marshall Rogers, Michael Golden, Walt Simonson, Paul Gulacy, Howard Chaykin and Berni Wrightson. Any chance we might see one or two of these fellows' work in the future? Perhaps even Denny himself could pen a few issues. Pretty please?

Well, anyways, congratulations, Denny—long may you reign.

Scott A. Caywood
1117 Alrita Ct. #3
Madison, WI 53713

For the time being, we're keeping Denny busy writing THE QUESTION, soon to come your way with some lovely art by Denys Cowan and Rick Magyar. None of the artists you've mentioned will be drawing Batman in the near future, but I think you'll enjoy the work of our new Bat-artist, due to debut in BATMAN #408. His name? Wait and see...

Dear Mr. O'Neil,

As I told your predecessor, I would return to BATMAN only under certain circumstances. Those circumstances have been met and I am back, hopefully to stay. Let me welcome you back to BATMAN. This was a title you always seemed to do your best on.

As for your first offering as an Editor, it was a distinct improvement over what has gone recently. Not perfect, mind you, but a distinct improvement.

Maggie shows the potential of becoming one of the feature's more interesting adversaries, provided she continues to grow and is not allowed to stagnate from neglect or indifference.

Barbara J. Randall's script was nicely done, and the plotting and pacing reminded me of the style of storytelling used in the old Batman TV show, only played straight. This was a refreshing